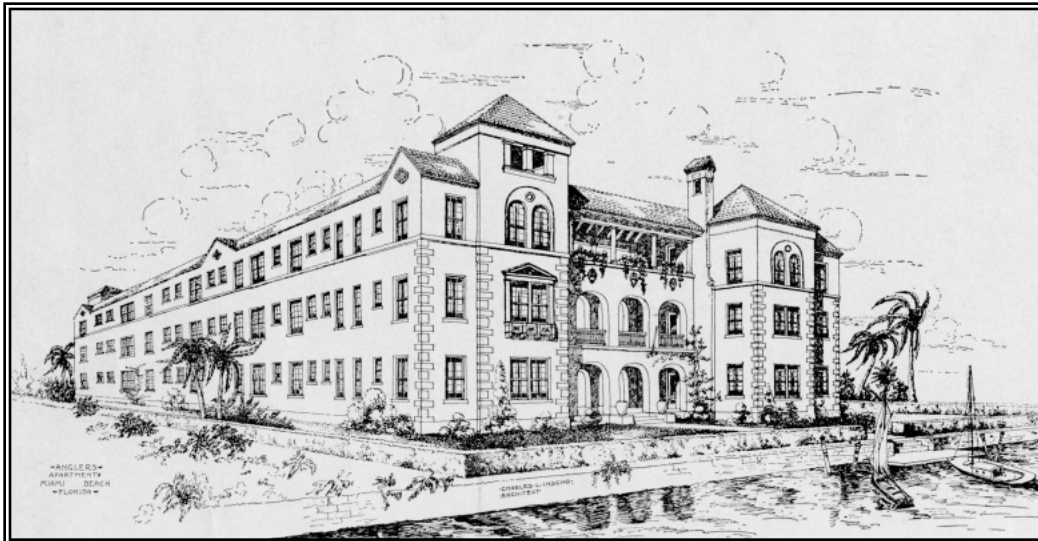


FLAMINGO WATERWAY

HISTORIC DISTRICT

DESIGNATION REPORT



Architect Charles L. Inscho's rendering of the Anglers Apartments, built in 1926 at 4812 Pinetree Drive, shows the Flamingo Waterway right outside the back door.

PREPARED BY
CITY OF MIAMI BEACH PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION REPORT
FLAMINGO WATERWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT

PREPARED BY
CITY OF MIAMI BEACH PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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FLAMINGO WATERWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT
CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION REPORT

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I. REQUEST

In September of 2003, the Planning Department received a request by local area residents to place an item on the agenda of the Historic Preservation Board at their next available meeting. This item of request was for the Historic Preservation Board to consider directing the Planning Department to proceed with the historic designation process for an area of the City generally located on the west side of Pinetree Drive between West 47th Street and 4816 Pinetree Drive as a possible historic district.

On September 9, 2003, the Historic Preservation Board unanimously approved a motion (7 to 0) to direct staff to schedule a special meeting of the Board in October of 2003, at which time the Board would consider directing staff to commence with the historic designation process for a possible local historic district in the multi-family residential area at West 47th Street and Pinetree Drive.

On October 22, 2003, the Historic Preservation Board unanimously approved a motion (6 to 0; 1 absence) to direct the Planning Department to proceed with research and prepare a preliminary evaluation and recommendation report for a possible historic district that is generally bounded by the center line of West 47th Street to the south, the eastern right-of-way line of Pinetree Drive to the east, the northern lot line of 4816 Pinetree Drive to the north, the western lot line of 353 West 47th Street to the West, and the eastern bulkhead lines of the Flamingo Waterway and Lake Surprise to the northwest (see **Map 1**).

On January 13, 2004, the Historic Preservation Board reviewed the preliminary evaluation report with recommendations prepared by the Planning Department relative to the designation of the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District. The Historic Preservation Board unanimously approved a motion (5 to 0; 2 absences) to direct staff to prepare a designation report and schedule a public hearing relative to the designation of this proposed historic district.

On December 9, 2004, the Planning Department hosted a courtesy public workshop in St. John's Methodist Church at 4760 Pinetree Drive within the proposed historic district. The focus of the community workshop was to discuss the possible historic designation of the Flamingo Waterway Historic District. About a dozen persons were in attendance at the meeting. There was a consensus of support for the designation of the proposed historic district; however, two attendees expressed a concern that historic designation may preclude the future ability to demolish their residential complex and construct a new structure above parking.

On December 14, 2004, the Historic Preservation Board reviewed the designation report and unanimously approved a motion (7 to 0) to recommend approval of the designation of the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District. At the same meeting, the Board approved a motion to reclassify the status of the Regency House apartments at 353 West 47th Street from "contributing" to "non-contributing."

On January 25, 2005, the Planning Board reviewed the designation report and unanimously approved a motion (5 to 0; 2 absences) to recommend approval of the designation of the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District.

On April 20, 2005, the City Commission reviewed the designation report and unanimously approved the designation (7 to 0) of the Flamingo Waterway Historic District on first and only reading public hearing. (See **Map 3** for historic district boundaries as adopted by the City Commission on April 20, 2005.)

II. DESIGNATION PROCESS

The process of historic designation is delineated in Sections 118-591 through 118-593 in Subpart B of the Land Development Regulations of the City Code (Chapter 118, Article X, Division 4). An outline of this process is delineated below.

Step One: A request for designation is made either by the City Commission, the Historic Preservation Board, other agencies and organizations as listed in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code, or the property owners involved. Proposals for designation shall include a completed application form available from the Planning Department.

Step Two: The Planning Department prepares a preliminary evaluation report with recommendations for consideration by the Board.

Step Three: The Historic Preservation Board considers the preliminary evaluation to determine if proceeding with a designation report is warranted.

The designation report is an historical and architectural analysis of the proposed district or site. The report:

- 1) describes the historic, architectural and/or archeological significance of the property or subject area proposed for Historical Site or District designation;
- 2) recommends Evaluation Guidelines to be used by the Board to evaluate the appropriateness and compatibility of proposed Developments affecting the designated Site or District; and
- 3) will serve as an attachment to the Land Development Regulations of the City Code.

Step Four: The designation report is presented to the Board at a public hearing. If the Board determines that the proposed site or district satisfies the requirements for designation as set forth in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code, the Board transmits a recommendation in favor of designation to the Planning Board and City Commission.

Step Five: The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed designation, and shall consider the proposed historic designation as an amendment to the Land Development Regulations of the City Code and, subsequently, transmit its recommendation to the City Commission.

Step Six: The City Commission may adopt an amendment to the Land Development Regulations of the City Code which thereby designates the Historic Preservation Site or Historic District after one (1) public hearing for a parcel of land less than ten (10) contiguous acres or after two (2) public hearings for a parcel of land which is more than ten (10) contiguous acres.

III. RELATION TO ORDINANCE CRITERIA

1. In accordance with Section 118-592 in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code, eligibility for designation is determined on the basis of compliance with the listed criteria set forth below.
 - (a) The Historic Preservation Board shall have the authority to recommend that properties be designated as historic buildings, historic structures, historic improvements, historic landscape features, historic interiors (architecturally significant public portions only), historic sites or historic districts if they are significant in the historical, architectural, cultural, aesthetic or archeological heritage of the city, the county, state or nation. Such properties shall possess an integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association and meet at least one (1) of the following criteria:
 - (1) Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the history of the city, the county, state or nation;
 - (2) Association with the lives of persons significant in the city's past history;
 - (3) Embody the distinctive characteristics of an historical period, architectural or design style or method of construction;
 - (4) Possesses high artistic values;
 - (5) Represent the work of a master, serve as an outstanding or representative work of a master designer, architect or builder who contributed to our historical, aesthetic or architectural heritage;
 - (6) Have yielded, or are likely to yield information important in pre-history or history;
 - (7) Be listed in the National Register of Historic Places;
 - (8) Consist of a geographically definable area that possesses a significant concentration of sites, buildings or structures united by historically significant past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development, whose components may lack individual distinction.
 - (b) A building, structure (including the public portions of the interior), improvement or landscape feature may be designated historic even if it has been altered if the

alteration is reversible and the most significant architectural elements are intact and repairable.

2. The proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District is eligible for historic designation as it complies with the criteria as specified in Section 118-592 in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code outlined above.

- (a) Staff finds the proposed historic district to be eligible for historic designation and in conformance with the designation criteria for the following reasons:

- (1) **Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the history of the city, the county, state or nation;**

Several structures in the proposed historic district provide a tangible link to the 1920s Florida Boom, which nearly rivaled the California gold rush in its speculative frenzy. The Flamingo Waterway itself is a remnant of the dredging and land fill processes that literally created much of Miami Beach's land mass in its early history. Two 1926 apartment buildings are testimonials to the days of financial boom and investment when this neighborhood was newly annexed into the City of Miami Beach. The post-World War II apartment buildings reflect the increased demand for affordable housing in that era largely due to the benefits of the G.I. Bill and a once again booming economy.

- (2) **Association with the lives of persons significant in the city's past history;**

This area is most closely connected to Carl G. Fisher, the prime developer of Miami Beach in the 1920s, whose Miami Beach Bay Shore Company dredged Lake Surprise and its waterways in 1923 and then platted this land for development in 1925. There is also an important connection with nationally-known business man and "dime-store" magnate Sebastian S. Kresge, who provided the property here for St. John's Methodist Church and its parsonage at 4760 and 4764 Pinetree Drive, respectively.

- (3) **Embody the distinctive characteristics of an historical period, architectural or design style or method of construction;**

This assemblage of eight contributing properties includes two Mediterranean Revival style apartment buildings that are typical of Florida architecture in the 1920s, and one example of a Mediterranean Revival-Art Deco Transitional residence from the 1930s. A majority of the buildings in the proposed historic district are prime examples of Post War Modern style apartment houses that were popularized here and elsewhere in Miami Beach with the societal and economic changes following World War II. Not only did building materials and forms undergo changes at this time, but the City also wrestled with zoning

variances and later zoning district changes as the era of private estates gave way to multi-family housing for the middle-class.

(4) Possess high artistic values;

By definition, these neighborhood buildings are not grandiose, but they admirably reflect the artistic values and design influences of their times and accomplish their aim of providing comfortable and affordable housing with skill and charm. Detailed workmanship is found in all of these structures.

(5) Represent the work of a master, serve as an outstanding or representative work of a master designer, architect or builder who contributed to our historical, aesthetic or architectural heritage;

The post-World War II era in architecture is now coming to be appreciated in South Florida and elsewhere in the nation. Its masters have not yet become household names, but Norman Giller, Gilbert Fein, Donald Reiff, and M. Tony Sherman are among the best known locally and are well-represented by excellent works in the proposed historic district and elsewhere in Miami Beach.

In addition, the district has buildings designed by Russell Pancoast, one of the City's best known architects from the 1930s; by Charles Inscho of Ohio; and by A. Hensel Fink, national architect for the Methodist Church in the 1950s.

(6) Have yielded, or are likely to yield information important in pre-history or history;

The proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District is significant for its built environment and its association with the architectural and cultural history of Miami Beach. It possesses an array of architectural styles that collectively trace the historical progression of architectural design in Middle Beach from the mid 1920s to the early 1950s, from one land development boom to another. It includes both single and multi-family residences as well as a commercial building and religious facilities. These buildings were designed in the Mediterranean Revival, Med-Deco Transitional, and Post War Modern styles of architecture by some of the best-known local architects of the time. Besides the architecture, the Flamingo Waterway and Lake Surprise themselves date back to the literal construction of the Miami Beach landscape in the 1920s, and the buildings here chronicle the City's development as a desirable tropical resort and residential community over three decades.

(7) Be listed in the National Register of Historic Places;

Although this area is not presently listed in the National Register of Historic Places, it appears to have clear potential to be determined to be eligible for national historic designation.

- (8) **Consist of a geographically definable area that possesses a significant concentration of sites, buildings or structures united by historically significant past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development, whose components may lack individual distinction;**

This area is a geographically distinct concentration of mostly apartment buildings that are located between two landmark features in Miami Beach: Pinetree Drive and the Flamingo Waterway. The eight contributing properties, built within only 27 years, provide an important concentration of historic architectural styles united by and addressing their waterfront locations in a unique way.

- (b) **A building, structure (including the public portions of the interior), improvement or landscape feature may be designated historic even if it has been altered if the alteration is reversible and the most significant architectural elements are intact and repairable.**

Although a few of the buildings within the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District have been altered to various extents over the years, these structures retain a major amount of their original architectural design integrity and contribute to the special character of the neighborhood. Exterior restoration could be successfully completed by following original architectural plans and available historical photographs and/or documentation. Despite existing alterations to these structures, they continue to be highly representative of the rich architectural and cultural history of Miami Beach.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF BOUNDARIES

On April 20, 2005, the City Commission reviewed the designation report and unanimously approved the designation (7 to 0) of the Flamingo Waterway Historic District on first and only reading public hearing. The historic district, as adopted by the City Commission, is generally bounded by the center line of West 47th Street to the south, the eastern right-of-way line of Pinetree Drive to the east, the northern lot line of 4816 Pinetree Drive to the north, the western lot line of 353 West 47th Street to the West, and the eastern bulkhead lines of the Flamingo Waterway and Lake Surprise to the northwest (see **Map 3**).

A detailed legal description of the historic district boundaries, as adopted by the City Commission on April 20, 2005, is provided below.

The boundaries of the Flamingo Waterway Historic District commence at the point of intersection of the center line of West 47th Street and the eastern right-of-way line of Pinetree Drive, as shown in the LAKE VIEW SUBDIVISION, recorded in Plat Book 14, at Page 42, Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. Said point being the POINT OF BEGINNING of the tract of land herein described; thence run northerly, along the eastern right-of-way line of said Pinetree Drive to the point of intersection

with the easterly extension of the north line of Lot 20, Block 32, of the above mentioned LAKE VIEW SUBDIVISION; thence run westerly, along the north line of said Lot 20 to the point of intersection with the eastern bulkhead line of the Flamingo Waterway; thence run southwesterly, along the eastern bulkhead lines of the Flamingo Waterway and Lake Surprise to a point. Said point being located 35.07 feet west (measured at a right angle) of the east line of Lot 11, Block 32, of the above mentioned LAKE VIEW SUBDIVISION; thence run southerly, along a line parallel and 35.07 feet west (measured at a right angle) of the east line of said Lot 11, and its southerly extension to the point of intersection with the center line of West 47th Street; thence run easterly, along the center line of said West 47th Street to the POINT OF BEGINNING. Said lands located, lying and being in the City of Miami Beach, Miami-Dade County, Florida.

The location of these boundaries has been determined through careful investigation and research of building records and historical documentation. They define a geographic area which possesses a significant concentration of historic buildings.

V. PRESENT OWNERS

The property located within the boundaries of the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District is held by multiple owners.

VI. PRESENT USE

The current use within the boundaries of the proposed historic district is predominately multi-family with apartment buildings, condominiums, and co-operatives. Other current uses represented in the district include a religious facility, a mixed-use building, two private parking lots, and a municipal parking lot.

VII. PRESENT ZONING

The established zoning districts within the boundaries of the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District are as follows:

RM-1	Multi-Family, Low Intensity
CD-1	Commercial, Low Intensity
GU	Government Use

These zoning districts coincide with the boundaries of the proposed historic district. Please refer to the zoning map for more detailed information (**Map 2**).

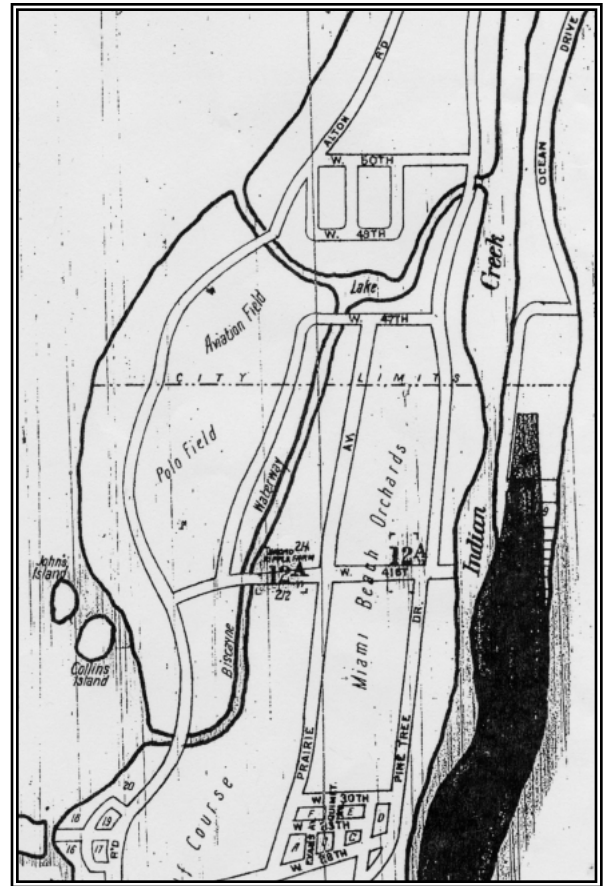
VIII. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District consists of eight contributing properties along Pinetree Drive and West 47th Street in the Lake View Subdivision. They line the eastern bank of the Flamingo Waterway, which leads from Lake Surprise to Indian Creek. The lake, waterway, and Pinetree Drive itself are all intimately tied into Miami Beach's early history. In addition, this small collection of buildings, constructed between 1926 and 1953, provides a sample of residential, commercial and institutional architecture in Miami Beach in the prime years of its development.

Early Development. Even before Miami Beach was incorporated as a town in 1915, most of the arable land west of Indian Creek and north of present-day 23rd Street was cultivated by Miami Beach pioneer and horticulturist John S. Collins of Moorestown, New Jersey. Pinetree Drive was originally Collins' farm road and was named for the Australian Pine trees he planted as a windbreak to protect his plantings. (A portion of the Pinetree Drive roadway between 30th Street and 46th Street was designated as a local historic site in 2001.)

In addition to agriculture, Collins and his family, who had joined him in Florida, founded the Miami Beach Improvement Company in 1912 to venture into real estate development. Although interrupted by World War I, the Collins/Pancoast family's vision of Miami Beach as a seaside resort began to take shape in the 1920s as part of the great "Florida Boom." During that decade, the population of Miami Beach increased tenfold,¹ the County and Venetian Causeways were built across Biscayne Bay, grand hotels and luxurious winter estates sprang up along the shorelines, and the real estate market was in a frenzy. John Collins' first love, agriculture, finally gave way to the development trend. By 1926, as he neared the age of 90, Collins platted his former farmland between 30th and 45th Streets as the four "Orchard" subdivisions.

At the time of Miami Beach's incorporation in 1915, the northern city limits were set along the midline of State-surveyed Sections 22 and 23 near present-day 46th Street (see **Figure 1**). The area encompassed by the proposed historic district did not become a part of Miami Beach until July 1, 1924,



when the city limits were extended to their present location at 87th Terrace. This action immediately doubled the City's territory.

Another important part of Miami Beach's early growth was the literal creation of new real estate by dredging and bulkheading the shallows of Biscayne Bay and the inland waterways. Carl Fisher and the Lummus brothers began filling in the bayfront in South Beach in 1913. Besides digging the Collins Canal, the Collins/Pancoast family dredged Lake Pancoast, a natural marshland, at about the same time. A swampy Bull's Island was filled in with dredged material in 1913 and was renamed Belle Isle a year later. Star Island was created around 1918, followed by Monument, Palm and Hibiscus Islands, the remaining Venetian Isles, LaGorce, Allison, and the four Sunset Islands. Normandy Isle was a natural landmass that was filled in by dredges about 1924.

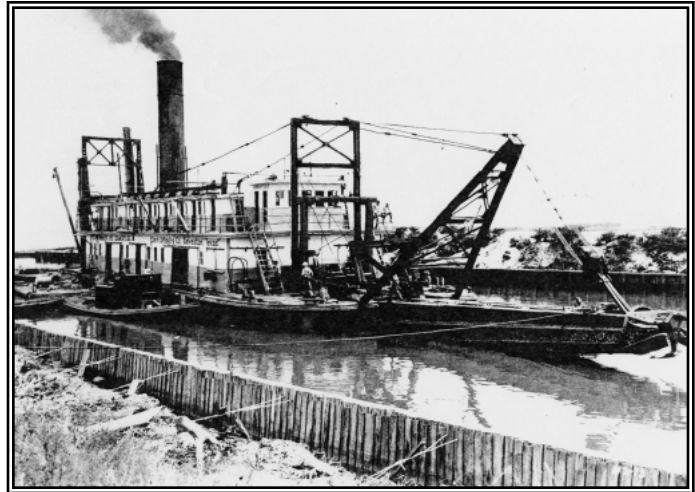


Figure 2 This 1923 photograph by Claude Matlack is labeled, "The 'Norman Davis' suction dredge in the canal leading into Surprise Lake." It is not known which of the lake's three waterways is seen here.

As part of these efforts, Lake Surprise and its three waterways (Surprise, Biscayne, and Flamingo) were dredged in the summer of 1923 (see **Figure 2**). A letter to Carl Fisher from the Clark Dredging Company of Galveston, Texas, dated August 9, 1923, gives the following progress report:

All of Surprise Waterway and Biscayne Waterway are completed. Both of these jobs were considered the slowest part of the work. The dredge "Davis" should complete Lake Surprise this month and Flamingo Waterway during September.²

Carl Fisher's Miami Beach Bay Shore Company platted the Beach View Subdivision, just north of the Flamingo Waterway, in 1924 and the Lake View Subdivision, flanking the Flamingo Waterway, in 1925.³ The plat of the Lake View Subdivision was signed on March 3, 1925, by W.A. Kohlhepp, company vice-president, and C.W. Chase, Jr., secretary.⁴ Just four days later, the Allison Island drawbridge was dedicated; it connected both Pinetree Drive and Alton Road to the oceanfront at 63rd Street. This event had an important effect on the development of the Lake Surprise area. It provided increased accessibility to the beach, since the bridge over Indian Creek at 41st Street had not yet been built. On March 6, 1925, the Miami Daily News proclaimed:

The Allison Island bridge is probably one of the most important developments of Miami Beach. It will not only serve the vast area of residential property north of [the] Collins

2 Historical Museum of Southern Florida, Carl Fisher Papers, Dredging File, 9 August 1923.

3 Atlas of Miami Beach to Golden Beach, Florida (Ft. Lauderdale, Florida: Frank B. Dolph, 1944), plate 12.

4 City of Miami Beach, Public Works Department, plat 47A, "Lake View Subdivision," Miami Beach Bay Shore Company, filed for record 14 April 1925, Plat Book 14, Page 42, in Dade County, Florida.

*canal, including the new Fisher sub-divisions north of Surprise Lake, but will furnish a direct route from the causeway to the north ocean front via Alton Road and 63rd Street. It is the only connection with the ocean from the mainland, north of 23rd Street, where a small bridge crosses the Collins canal.*⁵

There are several indications that the area around Lake Surprise was originally envisioned for hotel development. Carl Fisher built his King Cole Hotel on the lake's western shore in 1925 (now the site of the Miami Heart Institute). In addition, minutes of the Zoning Board of Adjustment from 1944 state that a large lot in Block 31 of the Lake View Subdivision, at the northeastern corner of Lake Surprise, was "originally plotted to be used for a hotel site, but under the original zoning of the city in 1930 it was classified in a single-family estate district."⁶ This change in intention from hotel to residential use may have been due to the collapse of the Florida Boom following the great hurricane of 1926.

The properties in the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District are situated on Lots 11 through 20 of Block 32 in the Lake View Subdivision. This block originally had 29 lots that wrapped around the southeastern corner of Lake Surprise. At the time the subdivision was filed for record on April 14, 1925, Lot 13 of Block 32 encompassed a large area at the northwestern corner of Pinetree Drive and West 47th Street.⁷ (West 47th Court did not exist at that time.) It is possible that this site, like the other large lot across the waterway, may have been considered for the development of a hotel. However, on February 9, 1926, the Miami Beach Bay Shore Company filed for record a new plat which subdivided Lot 13 into 13 smaller lots. In the following month, a building permit was issued for the Community Center Apartments (now the Berwick Building) to be constructed on five of these smaller lots.

The replatting of Lot 13 also created West 47th Court as a through-street that extended north to Lot 14 and opened onto both West 47th Street and Pinetree Drive.⁸ There is evidence in a 1941 aerial photograph that West 47th Court did in fact originally have this configuration, although it was not paved.⁹

The eight other subdivided lots from the original Lot 13 were again replatted on November 25, 1947, by Gebhard Jaeger and his wife Rose, to form "Tract A" and "Tract B." Esquire House and the Lighthouse Apartments now stand on these tracts. This 1947 plat amendment also truncated 47th Court to form a cul-de-sac.¹⁰ (See **Figures 3 and 4.**)

5 "Allison Island Span is Ready for Dedication," Miami Daily News, 6 March 1925, p. 23.

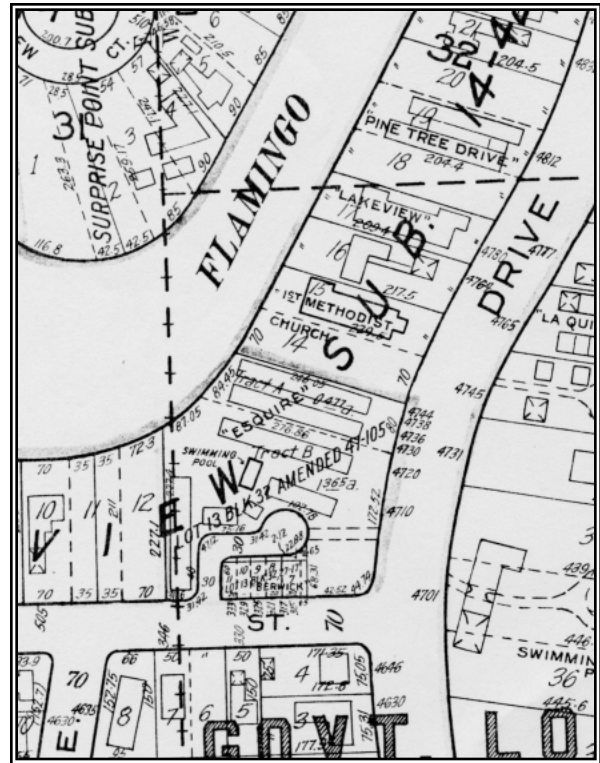
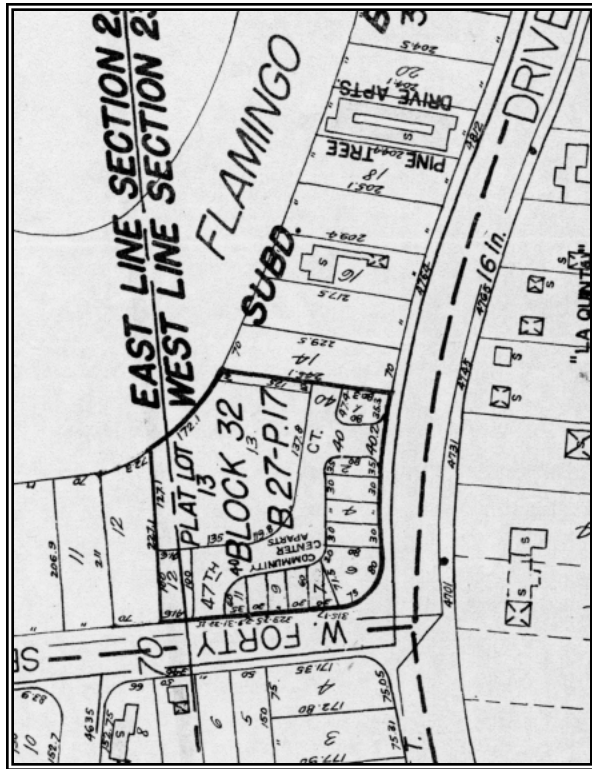
6 City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Minutes, 18 December 1944.

7 City of Miami Beach, Public Works Department, plat 47A, "Lake View Subdivision," Miami Beach Bay Shore Company, filed for record 14 April 1925, Plat Book 14, Page 42, in Dade County, Florida.

8 City of Miami Beach, Public Works Department, plat 47C, "Plat of Lot 13, Block 32, Lake View Subdivision," Miami Beach Bay Shore Co., filed for record 9 February 1926, Plat Book 27, Page 17, in Dade County, Florida.

9 City of Miami Beach, Public Works Department, Aerial Survey of Miami Beach, Florida (Lansing, Michigan: Abrams Aerial Survey Corporation, June 1941), sheet 138.

10 City of Miami Beach, Public Works Department, plat 47B, "Amended Plat of Lot 13, Block 32, Lake View Subdivision," filed for record 25 November 1947, Plat Book 47, Page 105, in Dade County, Florida.



Figures 3 and 4 These City atlas maps from 1935 (Figure 3, left) and 1952 (Figure 4, right) show the evolution of the area at the northwestern corner of West 47th Street and Pinetree Drive. The properties in the proposed historic district are situated on Lots 11 through 20 of Block 32 in the Lake View Subdivision (platted in 1925). Notice the change in West 47th Court from a winding lane to a cul-de-sac. The very large Lot 13 in this block was first parceled into 13 smaller lots in 1926 (see 1935 map, left), and some of these lots were later reconfigured as Tracts A and B in 1947 (see 1952 map, right). Also, the 1935 map shows only three buildings in the area of the proposed historic district: the Community Center Apartments, the house at 4764 Pinetree Drive, and the Pinetree Drive Apartments (originally the Anglers). In comparison, most of the structures in the district area are visible in the 1952 map, with the exception of the apartment houses at 4800 Pinetree and 353 West 47th Street (later built in 1953 and 1962, respectively).

Zoning. When the City adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1930, the area within the proposed historic district was classified as R-C or single-family estate. In fact, nearly all of the waterfront lots in Carl Fisher's properties between 47th Street and 60th Street were zoned for single-family estate, with a minimum lot area that ranged from 40,000 square feet in R-AA to 10,000 square feet in R-C. The inland lots were zoned for more modest single-family homes with a minimum lot area of 6,000 square feet in R-D (see **Figure 5**).

Two exceptions to the estate classification for waterfront lots in this area were the site of the King Cole Hotel on Lake Surprise (previously mentioned) and the site of the Community Center Apartments at 311-335 West 47th Street (including Lot 12 and the original Lot 13 in this block, all within the proposed historic district). These areas were zoned R-E or multi-family. (Hotels were also a permitted use in this zoning district.)¹¹

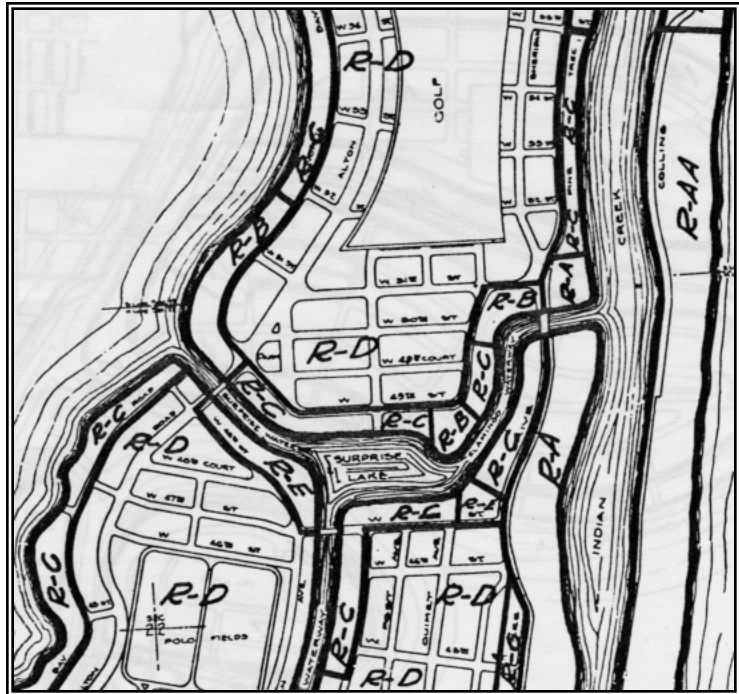


Figure 5 This map shows the zoning districts around Lake Surprise as they were first codified in 1930. The R-AA, R-A, R-B, and R-C districts lining the waterfronts were for single-family estates. The landlocked R-D districts were for single-family homes on smaller lots. Note the two R-E districts for multi-family residences and hotels: the one on the western shore of Lake Surprise (left) was the site of Carl Fisher's King Cole Hotel; and the one on the southeastern shore of the lake was where the Community Center Apartments had been built in 1926.

Fulfilling the intention of the single-family estate zoning, many wealthy industrialists built luxurious winter homes along Collins Avenue and Pinetree Drive in the 1920s and 1930s. Directly across Pinetree Drive from the Community Center Apartments was "Casa del Robador" belonging to Commodore Robert Law, "noted financier, sportsman, and world traveler" from New York¹² (see **Figure 6**). Other estates on the east side of Pinetree Drive in this area, on large lots facing onto Indian Creek, were those of Dr. L.O. Bricker; John Porter of Hartford, Connecticut; George H. Phelps, in advertising, from Detroit; and John H. Strongman, retired.¹³

¹¹ City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Zoning Ordinance No. 289, approved by City Council on 3 December 1930.

¹² Historical Museum of Southern Florida, F.F. Stearns, "Along Greater Miami's Sun-Sea-Ara," (booklet) 1932, p. 19.

¹³ Ibid.

The Buildings. The two oldest structures in the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District were permitted for construction in the spring of 1926. The first one was the Community Center Apartments at 311-335 West 47th Street. It was originally designed in the Mediterranean Revival style by Ohio architect Charles L. Inscho. The two-story building has 10 storefronts and a small lobby on the first floor; the lobby has a stairway that connects to the apartments on the second floor. It appears that the south and west elevations of the structure were modified by architects John and Coulton Skinner into a modest Streamline Moderne design in 1940. However, some architectural elements still survive from the original 1926 Mediterranean Revival design on the interior and exterior of the building, particularly on the north elevation fronting West 47th Court. The Community Center Apartments was renamed the Berwick Building sometime in the 1940s,¹⁴ which it is still called today.



Figure 6 This 1930 photo was taken looking westward from the Robert Law mansion at 4701 Pinetree Drive (now demolished). It shows the Community Center Apartments across from the entry gate and a view down West 47th Street.



Figure 7 The Anglers Apartments was built at 4812 Pinetree Drive in 1926. This photo was taken of its east elevation facing the street two years later. Note the sign at left advertising that this building is a co-operative.

The second structure to be built in the proposed historic district was the Anglers Apartments at 4812 Pinetree Drive (see **Figures 7 and 8**). It was also designed in the Mediterranean Revival style by the same architect, Charles L. Inscho, in 1926. The three-story apartment house has a central courtyard and a three-story high veranda on the rear elevation overlooking the waterway. It was probably named for the fishing prospects right outside the back door. The structure was renamed Pinetree Drive Apartments sometime in the mid 1930s.

¹⁴ Historical Museum of Southern Florida, City Directories, 1944 to 1977.

An advertisement from 1928 gives summer rates for apartment rentals in these two buildings. Accommodations for four people cost \$45 to \$75 a month at the Community Centre (sic) Apartments, and \$75 to \$150 a month at the Anglers Apartments in that year.¹⁵



Figure 8 The Community Center Apartments (center left) and Anglers Apartments (center right) are all that stand on the eastern shore of Lake Surprise in this 1927 aerial photo. A third building by architect Charles L. Inscho, the Bay Shore Apartments, is seen at West 51st Street and Cherokee Avenue (upper right). Notice also Carl Fisher's polo fields for the Nautilus Hotel north of West 41st Street (upper left) as well as the Australian pines that line Pinetree Drive (middle left).

¹⁵ Historical Museum of Southern Florida, Pamphlets - Miami Beach File, "The Lure of Miami Beach," (pamphlet) 1928.

The next structure to appear in the proposed historic district was a single-family residence for owner Joseph H. Assel at 4764 Pinetree Drive (see **Figures 9 and 11**). Built in 1934, the two-story residence was designed in the Mediterranean Revival-Art Deco Transitional style by architect Russell T. Pancoast, who was the grandson of John S. Collins. This home now serves as the parsonage for St. John's Methodist Church.

Nothing else was built on these lots until after World War II. The six other properties in the proposed historic district were constructed within a fourteen-year span (1948-1962) during the postwar building boom, when a debate about land use in this area took place. It began with the proposal for a church at 4760 Pinetree Drive. Playing an integral role in its creation was dime-store magnate Sebastian S. Kresge (see **Figure 10**).



Figure 9 This 1935 aerial photo was taken above Indian Creek looking towards the west. A portion of the Anglers Apartments is seen at 4812 Pinetree Drive (middle far right). The J.H. Assel residence, which was designed by Russell Pancoast a year earlier, is visible just to its south; it now serves as the parsonage for St. John's Methodist Church. Across the Flamingo Waterway, to the west of this residence, is the point of land that was originally envisioned as a hotel site. Carl Fisher's King Cole Hotel is present on the western shore of Lake Surprise (top right). Note the large single-family estates built on the east side of Pinetree Drive along the Indian Creek waterfront, including the U-shaped Robert Law property at the end of West 47th Street across from the Community Center Apartments.

Kresge was one of the many northern millionaires who became winter residents of Miami Beach in the 1920s and 1930s. He had started as a Pennsylvania farm boy, teacher, bookkeeper, and salesman who invested in two dime-stores in Memphis and Detroit in 1897. Two years later he formed the S.S. Kresge Company in Detroit, and its red-fronted dime-stores became an American institution. Kresge Department Stores, headquartered in Newark, New Jersey, was started

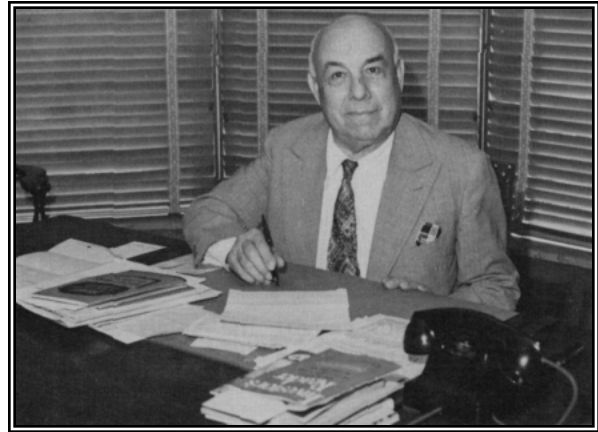


Figure 10 Sebastian S. Kresge, of dime-store fame, was a major benefactor to the Methodist congregation who built their new church at 4760 Pinetree Drive in 1949.

in 1923. Mindful of his own rags-to-riches story, Kresge established the philanthropic Kresge Foundation of Detroit in 1924. By 1937, Kresge owned 739 stores in 26 states, Washington, D.C., and Canada.¹⁶

In 1930, Kresge bought a house for himself and his wife Clara at 5625 Pinetree Drive in Miami Beach.¹⁷ He also dealt in land development here:

*Wishing to have a part in the development of Miami Beach, he is engaging in real estate by selling beautiful tropical homes located in the choicest sections of the beach.*¹⁸

In 1936, the Kresges platted five lots on the east side of Pinetree Drive at the mouth of the Flamingo Waterway as the Kresge Subdivision.¹⁹

Previously, in 1924, the First United Methodist congregation had organized in Ocean Beach²⁰ and built a church at 550 Jefferson Avenue. By the end of World War II, the City's residential population was moving northward into Middle Beach, so the congregation looked for a new location to better serve its members. In 1946, the Kresge Foundation donated the land at 4760 Pinetree Drive as the site for a new church building,²¹ but it did not come easily.

As mentioned earlier, the land north of the original Lot 13 in this block had been zoned single-family estate in 1930. Therefore, the First United Methodist congregation had to seek approval for a special use variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment and City Council in order to construct their new

¹⁶ Society Pictorial, 20 February 1937, p. 19.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁹ City of Miami Beach, Public Works Department, plat 48C, "Kresge Subdivision," S.S. Kresge and his wife Clara, approved by Dade County Commission on 3 June 1936, Plat Book 39, Page 30.

²⁰ Paul N. Jewett, Window and Witness, St. John's on the Lake First United Methodist Church, Miami Beach, 1985, p.12.

²¹ "Beach Methodists to Begin Building," Miami News, 19 February 1949.

church on Lot 15. In addition, this site was located immediately south of the single-family residence at 4764 Pinetree Drive. When the owner of this house strongly objected to having a church next door, Kresge himself purchased the house for the church to use as a parsonage, which it remains today (see **Figure 11**).

In 1946, when the Zoning Board of Adjustment debated the construction of a church in an area zoned for single-family estates, the argument was made that this site was situated between two non-conforming apartment buildings: the Anglers Apartments to the north and the Community Center Apartments to the south. It was felt that the lot was no longer suitable for a private residence and that a church should be permitted. In April of 1946, a special use variance for the new church was approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustment and City Council with two conditions: that the single-family residence located immediately to the north of the proposed church site be acquired to serve as a buffer to the surrounding residential neighborhood, and that off-street parking be provided on the lot to the south.²²

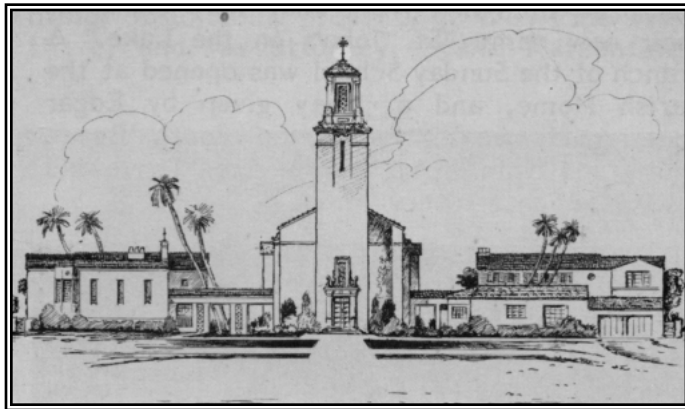


Figure 12 This rendering shows architect A. Hensel Fink's proposal for the new Methodist church on Pinetree Drive. The parsonage is seen at right; it was designed by Russell Pancoast as a residence in 1934. The wing at left, housing a chapel and church school, was never built.



Figure 11 The site for St. John's Methodist Church at 4760 Pinetree Drive was dedicated on May 12, 1946. The single-family home at 4764 Pinetree Drive is seen in the background of this photo. It now serves as the parsonage for the church. Both the land and the house were given to the congregation by Sebastian Kresge.

St. John's on the Lake First United Methodist Church, as the new church was named, was built in 1949. It was designed in the Post War Modern style by A. Hensel Fink, a nationally-known architect for the Methodist Church, with Robert M. Little as local associate (see **Figure 12**). The first service of worship was held in the new sanctuary on November 27, 1949. A rear addition for a social hall and chapel was built in 1958; it was designed by Alexander Lewis.²³ This addition did not meet the rear setback requirement, but again a variance was granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustment with the condition that the church maintain the adjoining lot to the south as a parking lot.²⁴

22 City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Minutes, 25 March 1946 and 8 April 1946; and City Clerk's Office, City Council Records, Minutes, 17 April 1946.

23 Paul N. Jewett, Window and Witness, St. John's on the Lake First United Methodist Church, Miami Beach, 1985, pp. 19-25 and 30.

24 City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Minutes, 28 June 1957 and 25 July 1957; and ZBA File #Z-10, amendment to variance, approved 31 March 1958.

While the church was being debated, the Pinetree Apartments was built at 4730-4740 Pinetree Drive in 1948. The site was located in the new Tract A of the original Lot 13 in this block, which was already zoned for multi-family residences. The two-story building was designed by noted architect Norman Giller as a garden apartment in the Post War Modern style. It has a pair of bar-shaped building wings that flank a central courtyard and are connected by a grand "proscenium" on the east elevation facing Pinetree Drive. The structure is now a co-operative apartment house called Lighthouse Apartments.

Two more multi-family residential properties were built in the proposed historic district in 1950. One was the Lake View Apartments (now Pine Tree Palms condominium) at 4780 Pinetree Drive. A special use variance was granted to build an apartment house on this site within a single-family estate zoning district in 1947 (amended 1950). The owners, Dave and Mary Alper, contended that the property was unsuitable for single-family use because it was located between a church to the south (St. John's) and a non-conforming apartment house to the north (the Anglers).²⁵ The 10-unit, two-story apartment house was designed by Gilbert Fein in the Post War Modern style.

The other residential property built here in 1950 was the Surprise Lake Apartments (now Esquire House co-op), an ensemble of four two-story buildings at 4710-4720 Pinetree Drive (see **Figure 13**). The site was located in Tract B of the original Lot 13 in this block, and it was within the multi-family zoning district. The buildings were designed by M. Tony Sherman in the Post War Modern style. An advertisement and newspaper article from 1963 quotes prices for a one-bedroom apartment here at \$9,500 and a two-bedroom at \$15,250; amenities included a private entrance to each apartment, an Olympic-sized pool, and a private dock on Lake Surprise. At that time it was already called Esquire House, and it had been a non-profit co-op for two years. The community spirit here was remarkable, with the residents holding frequent communal cookouts on the patio:

The whole atmosphere was inspiring, the beautiful view of the sun setting over the wide span of water, the colorful landscaping with all manner of tropical plantings, and the tremendous dock accommodating a half a dozen boats at one time. ...There is but one way to term a co-op a true success...by incorporating a congenial group of people

This You Must See to Believe!

NOW AS LITTLE AS \$4,663

CASH DOWN BUYS PINE TREE DRIVE CO-OP

- ✓ OLYMPIC POOL
- ✓ COMPLETELY FURNISHED
- ✓ PRIVATE DOCK
- ✓ PRIVATE ENTRANCE TO EACH APARTMENT
- ✓ AIR CONDITIONED & HEATED
- ✓ OVERSIZE ROOMS & CLOSETS
- ✓ RESIDENT MANAGEMENT

Only prestige waterfront co-op in the fabulous estate section of Miami Beach. Unheard of value — superb location — surrounded by estates valued up to \$400,000! You get more "home" for your money.

<p>ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT</p> <p>AS LITTLE AS \$9,500 FULL PRICE</p> <p>(as low as \$4,663 down)</p>	<p>TWO BEDROOM TWO BATH APARTMENT</p> <p>AS LITTLE AS \$15,250 FULL PRICE</p> <p>(as low as \$7,900 down)</p>
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CARRYING CHARGES APPROXIMATELY 60% LESS THAN CURRENT RENTAL PLUS INCREASE IN EQUITIES.

Your dreams of splendor, luxury, comfort and a carefree life in prestige surroundings CAN come true today — for as little as \$4,663.

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APARTMENTS OPEN FOR INSPECTION...

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4710 Pine Tree Drive • Miami Beach • Jefferson 8-8837

Sales Agent: Bruce Youngman, Inc., Realtors

"SUCCESSFULLY OPERATING WITH HAPPY OWNERS!"

Figure 13 Two of the four buildings that comprise the Esquire House apartments are seen in this 1963 ad. They were originally called Surprise Lake Apartments when they were built in 1950.

²⁵ City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Minutes, 13 May 1947 and 9 May 1950.

*to live co-operatively in the true sense of the word, bound together with ties of friendship.*²⁶

In 1953, a new residential property was added to the proposed historic district called 4800 Pinetree Drive. Like its neighbor to the south (Lake View Apartments), a special use variance was required in order to build an apartment house on this site within a single-family estate zoning district. The owner, Max Goldhoff, argued through his attorney that *"the property could not be given away"* for single-family use because it was situated between two apartment buildings.²⁷ The special use variance was granted for the ten-unit, two-story apartment house at 4800 Pinetree Drive in October of 1953.²⁸ The building was designed by Donald Reiff in the Post War Modern style.

In August of 1959, the City acquired by eminent domain a portion of Tract B in this block at 4700 Pinetree Drive. It was an effort to provide off-street parking in the area. This site remains a municipal parking lot today.²⁹

The last building to appear in the proposed historic district was the Regency House, a nine-story apartment building at 353 West 47th Street. This site was located within the multi-family zoning district. Completed in 1963, the apartment house was designed by MacKay & Gibbs in the Post War Modern style, completing this assemblage of mid-century residential structures.

It was not until 1972 that the City approved a zoning district change for this area from single-family estate to multi-family. The existing multi-family zoning district at the northwestern corner of West 47th Street and Pinetree Drive was expanded northward to 4816 Pinetree Drive. (The boundaries of the proposed historic district coincide with the expanded boundaries of the multi-family zoning district.) This change in zoning classification from single-family estate to multi-family may have been made to better reflect the as-built conditions and multi-family residential use of the northern lots in the district. It also brought the three non-conforming apartment houses at 4780, 4800, and 4812 Pinetree Drive into conformance with the new underlying multi-family zoning district. Two other zoning changes occurred later within the boundaries of the proposed historic district. In 1983, the municipal parking lot at 4700 Pinetree Drive was reclassified from multi-family residential to municipal or government use. About six years later, the site of the Community Center Apartments (now the Berwick Building) at 311-335 West 47th Street was reclassified from multi-family residential to commercial, low intensity.³⁰

The Architects.

Gilbert M. Fein (1919-2003) was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1919, and he graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Architecture from New York University in 1942. He served in the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II and settled in Miami Beach after honeymooning here in 1947. He was first employed as a draftsman for Norman M. Giller and later opened his own firm, Gilbert M. Fein,

26 Dale S. Renault, "Life Has Meaning at Esquire Apts.," Miami Beach Daily Sun, 2 June 1963, pp. 17-18 B.

27 City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Minutes, 18 September 1953.

28 City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Minutes, 18 September 1953, 19 October 1953, and 29 October 1953.

29 City of Miami Beach, City Clerk's Office, Archives, 4700 Pinetree Drive, Warranty Deed 161, 6 August 1959; Resolution No. 9789, adopted 18 June 1958; and Resolution No. 10142, adopted 1 June 1959.

30 City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Zoning Ordinances and Maps, 1930 to Present.

in 1949. He designed hundreds of residential and commercial buildings in South Florida in the new Post War Modern style, becoming "one of the masters of Modernism."³¹ He was a consulting architect to the Congress Inn Motel Group and the Ramada Inn Corporation. He designed the major north addition to the Miami Beach Exhibition Hall (now the Miami Beach Convention Center) in 1967. A great number of his apartment buildings are in Normandy Isle and elsewhere in North Beach. In his honor, the Miami Beach City Commission recognized his lifetime achievement in modern design and declared "Gilbert Fein Day" on February 5, 2003, just a month before his death.

In the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District, Fein designed the Lake View Apartments (now the Pinetree Palms) at 4780 Pinetree Drive in 1950. Elsewhere in Miami Beach his works include:

Tuxedo Park at 1900 Liberty Avenue in 1951,
Starlite Hotel at 750 Ocean Drive in 1952,
Helen Mar Annex at 2445 Lake Pancoast Drive in 1956,
Park Isle Club at 780-73rd Street in 1957, and
Sun Haven (now the News Café) at 800 Ocean Drive in 1958.

Alpha Hensel Fink (1903-1999) was from West Virginia, and he received a Bachelor's degree in Architecture from the Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1926. He worked in Philadelphia and headed the Department of Architecture at Drexel University beginning in 1928. He became a partner in Sundt, Wenner and Fink in 1934. He started his own firm, A. Hensel Fink and Associates, in 1947.³² In the post-war years, he was the denominational architect in charge of approving Methodist Board of Missions projects. Mount Zion Methodist Church in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, built in 1950, was inspired by an earlier church design by Fink in the state of Washington.³³ Fink was also the associate architect of Goodrich Chapel in Albion, Michigan, in 1958,³⁴ and he contributed to the design of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. He is also credited with the circular design of the Abraham S. Kay Spiritual Life Center at American University, built in 1965. In the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District, Fink worked with local architect Robert M. Little in designing St. John's Methodist Church at 4760 Pinetree Drive in 1949.

Norman M. Giller was born in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1918, and he earned a degree in architecture from the University of Florida in 1945. He apprenticed with Henry Hohaus and Albert Anis during the early 1940s in Miami Beach. After World War II, he became one of South Florida's most influential and inventive architects of the Post War Modern style.³⁵ He still maintains a practice today together with his son, Ira Giller. His contribution to the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District was the Pinetree Apartments (now Lighthouse) at 4730-4740 Pinetree Drive in 1948. Some of his best-known works include:

Bombay Hotel (now the Golden Sands) at 6901 Collins Avenue in 1951,
Giller Building at 975 41st Street in 1957,

31 "Gilbert M. Fein," Miami Herald, Obituaries, 11 March 2003, p.4-B.

32 Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Project website.

33 Southern Lancaster County (Pennsylvania) Historical Society website.

34 Albionvision.com.

35 Eric P. Nash and Randall C. Robinson, Jr., MiMo: Miami Modern Revealed (San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books, 2004), pp. 92-93.

Carillon Hotel at 6801 Collins Avenue in 1957,
Diplomat Hotel (now demolished) at 3555 South Ocean Drive, Hollywood, in 1957,
North Shore Park Band Shell at 7251 Collins Avenue in 1961, and
Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce at 1920 Meridian Avenue in 2001 with his son Ira
Giller.

Charles Leroy Inscho (1875-1959) was born in Delaware, Ohio, and graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University after an interruption to serve in the Spanish American War. He was a war correspondent who documented actions on the battlefields through his sketches and watercolors. He also served for five years as an "artificer" with the Ohio National Guard and was honorably discharged in 1900. Inscho became an associate member of the American Institute of Architects in 1909 and later served as president of their Ohio chapter in 1933 to 1934. He and his son Charles Curtiss Inscho (1912-1997) were principals in the firm Inscho, Brand and Inscho in Columbus, Ohio. C.L. Inscho's work included Indianola Presbyterian Church and at least 45 residences, many of them summer homes, in the Columbus area. At least three bungalows that he designed in the early 1900s are located in the Iuka Ravine National Register Historic District in Columbus. In addition to architecture, he was also a prolific artist and master craftsman in woodcarving.

Mr. Inscho wintered in Captiva, Florida, for 30 years, but it is not clear how he came to Miami Beach. He designed two buildings here in 1925: the Ocean Breeze Apartments at 4349 Sheridan Avenue and a two-story residence at 4309 Sheridan Avenue. In 1926, besides the Community Center and Anglers apartment buildings in the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District, he also designed the Fisher Apartments (now demolished) at 4220 Prairie Avenue and the Bay Shore Apartments, a two-story building with six stores and eight apartments, at 700-708 West 51st Street.³⁶

Alexander Lewis was born in Kentucky in 1899, and he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Architecture from the University of Kentucky in 1924. He practiced in Miami Beach both before and after World War II where he designed a number of single-family residences. In 1928, he designed the original Sterling Building at 919 Lincoln Road, which was later remodeled in the Streamline Moderne style by V.H. Nellenbogen in 1941. Lewis' surviving apartment buildings include: the Adelphia Apartments at 6055 Indian Creek Drive in 1940, the Malabo Apartment Hotel at 3865 Indian Creek Drive in 1947, and the London House at 1965 Washington Avenue in 1948. In the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District, he designed the major rear addition to St. John's Methodist Church at 4760 Pinetree Drive in 1958.

Robert M. Little was born in Pennsylvania in 1903 and studied at the Beaux Arts School in Philadelphia. He came to Miami Beach at the height of the Florida Boom in 1925. Here he worked with Robert A. Taylor, and later opened his own practice in 1934. He designed commercial, residential, and institutional buildings in the Greater Miami area and Fort Lauderdale, including several buildings at the University of Miami (the Merrick Building,³⁷ Lowe Art Gallery, Ring Theater, Eaton Hall, Meyer Law School Building, and Volpe Music Building). In Miami Beach, he designed a two-story addition to Washington Storage (now the Wolfsonian/FIU) at 1001 Washington Avenue in 1936, the Casablanca Apartments at 6839 Abbott Avenue in 1937, and many fine single-family residences. In

36 Correspondence with Molly Inscho, Granddaughter of Charles L. Inscho, Worthington, Ohio, 2003.

37 Tracy Hollingsworth, History of Dade County, Florida (Coral Gables, Florida: Glade House, 1949), p. 192.

the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District, Little collaborated with A. Hensel Fink in designing St. John's Methodist Church at 4760 Pinetree Drive in 1949. Little was made a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1960. *"The perforated pre-cast concrete panel is often a signature of his work."*³⁸

MacKay & Gibbs was an association formed by Frederick Alton Gibbs and Edward A. MacKay in 1946, with an office at 927 41st Street in Miami Beach. Gibbs was born in Miami in 1910, and he studied at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh. He returned to Miami and worked in association with Henry Hohausser from 1934 to 1941.³⁹ MacKay was born in Flint, Michigan, in 1908, and he graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1934.⁴⁰

In the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District, MacKay & Gibbs designed the Regency House at 353 West 47th Street in 1962. Other fine examples of their work in Miami Beach include:⁴¹

Sherbrooke Apartments at 901 Collins Avenue in 1947,
Museum Walk Apartments at 2315-2335 Pinetree Drive in 1947,
Amberlee Apartments at 1520 Euclid Avenue in 1947,
Surfcomber Hotel at 1717 Collins Avenue in 1948,
Seacomber Hotel at 1737 Collins Avenue in 1948,
Carol Lee Apartments at 7610-7620 Harding Avenue in 1952, and
Carriage Club North at 5005 Collins Avenue in 1965.

Russell T. Pancoast (1899-1972) was born in Moorestown, New Jersey, in 1899, but grew up in Miami Beach as the grandson of pioneer John S. Collins and the son of Thomas J. Pancoast, early Miami Beach mayor and founder of the local Chamber of Commerce. Russell Pancoast studied architecture at Cornell, and then returned to Miami Beach where he worked from 1925 to about 1955. His contribution to the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District was the 1934 single-family residence at 4764 Pinetree Drive, which now serves as the parsonage for St. John's Methodist Church. He is also credited for designing such notable buildings as:

Surf Club at 9011 Collins Avenue, Surfside, in 1929,
Collins Memorial Library (now the east wing of the Bass Museum) at 2121 Park Avenue in 1930,
Miami Beach Woman's Club at 2401 Pinetree Drive in 1933, and
Peter Miller Hotel at 1900 Collins Avenue in 1936.

Donald Reiff (1924-1982) was born in the Bronx, New York, in 1924. After graduating in architecture from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, in 1948, he came to Miami and worked as a draftsman for Wahl Snyder, Robert Fitch Smith, and the firm of Rufus Nims, L. Murray Dixon and Edwin T. Reeder. During his 30-year career, his own projects in the Greater Miami area

38 "Three Miamians Get High Honor," Miami Herald, 28 February 1960.

39 American Institute of Architects Membership Application, "Gibbs, Frederick A.," American Institute of Architects, Florida South Chapter, Coral Gables, Florida.

40 American Institute of Architects Membership Application, "MacKay, Edward A.," American Institute of Architects, Florida South Chapter, Coral Gables, Florida.

41 City of Miami Beach, Building Department, Building Permit Records.

included the Towers of Key Biscayne, Midway Mall Shopping Center, Dadeland Medical Building, and Kendall Lakes Mall. In the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District, he designed the 4800 Pinetree Drive apartment house in 1953. Elsewhere in Miami Beach, his architectural works include:

Sun Ray Apartments at 728 Ocean Drive in 1953,
Ankara Motel (formerly the Banana Bungalow and now the Creek) at 2360 Collins Avenue in 1954, and
the garden apartment house at 1446 Ocean Drive in 1958.

M. Tony Sherman's contribution to the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District is the Surprise Lake Apartments (now Esquire House), an ensemble of four buildings at 4710-4720 Pinetree Drive in 1950. His other buildings in Miami Beach include the Catalina Hotel at 1732 Collins Avenue in 1948 and the Waves Hotel at 1052 Ocean Drive in 1950. Elsewhere he designed the Yankee Clipper Hotel in Fort Lauderdale, the Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas, and the Sunniland Shopping Center in Kendall. He also contributed to the design of Lauderdale Isles, a project of 700 single family homes.⁴²

John & Coulton Skinner were brothers from Cleveland, Ohio, and both studied architecture at the University of Toronto. William Coulton (1891-1963) continued working in Toronto and Detroit; John (1893-1967) went on to Harvard, traveled to Europe on a fellowship, and then was named head of the architecture department at the University of Georgia. The brothers both came to Miami in 1925, where they contributed to the design of the residential "villages" of George Merrick's planned community in Coral Gables. John also headed the department of architecture at the new University of Miami in 1927. The Skinners designed residences and hotels in Miami and Miami Beach in the pre-war years and later partnered with Harold Steward in 1941. After World War II, their designs included the Miami Seaquarium, the Miami Public Library (now demolished), Dade-County Auditorium, Mercy Hospital, an addition to Jackson Memorial Hospital, and several buildings at the University of Miami.⁴³ In the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District, they remodeled the Community Center Apartments (now the Berwick Building) at 311-335 West 47th Street into a modest Streamline Modern design in 1940. Elsewhere in Miami Beach they are credited for designing the Barbizon Hotel at 530 Ocean Drive in 1937 and the Bentley Hotel at 500 Ocean Drive in 1939.

42 "Work of Architect No Soft Snap Today," Miami News, 23 October 1955.

43 University of Miami School of Architecture, Coral Gables: An American Garden City (Paris, France: Editions Norma, 1997), p. 205.



Figure 14 This current photo was taken from the southeastern shore of Lake Surprise looking northward up the Flamingo Waterway. The properties in the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District are situated on the eastern bank of the waterway (right), the namesake for the district.

Conclusion. In this unique waterside enclave, the City has a fine collection of historic architecture which spans from the mid 1920s to the early 1950s, from one land development boom to another. It includes both single and multi-family residences, as well as commercial and religious facilities. The architectural styles featured in this district are Mediterranean Revival, Med-Deco Transitional, and Post War Modern. This group of buildings was designed by some of the best-known local architects of the time. Besides the architecture, the Flamingo Waterway and Lake Surprise themselves date back to the literal construction of the Miami Beach landscape in the 1920s, and the buildings here chronicle the City's development as a desirable tropical resort and residential community over three decades

IX. ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Exemplary buildings of three (3) distinct Miami Beach architectural movements have been identified in the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District. The architectural styles represented in this area include Mediterranean Revival, Mediterranean Revival/Art Deco Transitional, and Post War Modern or Miami Modern (MiMo).

Mediterranean Revival (circa mid-1910s to early 1930s)

Mediterranean Revival architecture was the "style of choice" for the first major land development period in Miami Beach. Its connotation of Mediterranean resort architecture, combining expressions of Italian, Moorish, North African, and Southern Spanish themes, was found to be an appropriate and commercially appealing image for the new Floridian seaside resort; it was a style that was simultaneously being used expansively in California and other areas of similar climate.

During the mid-1910s through the early 1930s, the style was frequently applied to hotels, apartment buildings, commercial structures, and single-family residences. Its architectural vocabulary was characterized by stucco walls, low-pitched terra cotta and historic Cuban tile roofs, arches, scrolled or tile capped parapet walls, and articulated door surrounds, sometimes utilizing Spanish Baroque decorative motifs and Classical elements. Feature detailing was occasionally executed in keystone or patterned ceramic tile.

Application of the architectural vocabulary in Miami Beach ranged from sparing to modestly exuberant, and building massing varied from a simple rectangular form to stepped massing with recessed wall planes and tower-like corner features. Wooden casement or double-hung windows of several configurations provided additional detail to the facades.

An example of a Contributing Structure designed in the Mediterranean Revival style in the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District is the Anglers Apartments at 4812 Pinetree Drive (see **Figures 15 and 16**). The Community Center Apartments (now the Berwick Building) at 311-335 West 47th Street was also designed in the Mediterranean Revival style in 1926 (see **Figure 17**); however, the building's south and west elevations were later modified into a modest Streamline Moderne design in 1940 (see **Figure 18**).



Figure 15 This current photo shows the east or front elevation of the Anglers Apartments facing Pinetree Drive. Built in 1926, it was designed by Charles L. Inscho in the Mediterranean Revival style. Typical of this architectural style, the building features stepped massing with tower-like elements, multiple clay barrel tile roofs, carved rafter tails, delicate chimneys with clay barrel tile coping, a rough stucco finish, arched openings, and decorative quoins.



Figure 16 The Anglers Apartments has a central courtyard and a three-story high veranda on the west or rear elevation overlooking the Flamingo Waterway. This current photo shows the southwestern corner of the structure on the bank of the waterway.



Figure 17 Built in 1926, the Community Center Apartments (now the Berwick Building) at 311-335 West 47th Street was originally designed by Charles L. Inscho in the Mediterranean Revival style. This current photo was taken of the structure's north elevation facing the alley on West 47th Court. It shows some of the surviving architectural elements from the original 1926 Mediterranean Revival design, including some original storefronts on the first floor; a focal window on the second floor that is highlighted by engaged pilasters, a scrolled window surround, and a cartouche; as well as a stepped roofline that alternates between a scrolled parapet wall and carved rafter tails.



Figure 18 According to the building permit records, it appears that the south and west elevations of the Community Center Apartments were modified by architects John and Coulton Skinner into a modest Streamline Moderne design in 1940. This current photo shows the southwestern corner of the structure facing West 47th Street.

Mediterranean Revival/Art Deco Transitional (circa late 1920s to mid-1930s)

"Med/Deco" in Miami Beach was a synthesis of Mediterranean Revival form and Art Deco decorative detail or vice versa. This unique hybrid style became a fascinating bridge between the "familiar" and the "new" as the allure of Art Deco found its way into the City's architectural vocabulary. Clean stepped roof lines and crisp geometric detailing replaced scrolled parapets, bracketed cornices, and Classical features on structures of clear Mediterranean Revival form. Likewise, sloped barrel tile roofs rested gracefully on edifices with spectacular Art Deco entrances and facade treatments.

Some of the most celebrated architects in Miami Beach designed structures in this brief-lived but very significant style, including V.H. Nellenbogen, Henry Hohaus, Russell Pancoast, and T. Hunter Henderson. The predominant exterior material of Med/Deco Transitional was smooth stucco with raised or incised details. Featured stucco areas were often patterned or scored.

Keystone, either natural or filled and colored, was frequently used to define special elements. Windows ranged from wooden and steel casement to wooden double-hung, and even large single windows in gracefully curved masonry openings.

An example of a Contributing Structure designed in the Mediterranean Revival/Art Deco Transitional style in the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District is the parsonage of St. John's on the Lake First United Methodist Church at 4764 Pinetree Drive (see **Figure 19**).



Figure 19 Built in 1934, the residence at 4764 Pinetree Drive was designed by Russell Pancoast in the Mediterranean Revival/Art Deco Transitional style. It now serves as the parsonage for St. John's Methodist Church. The L-shaped structure is two-stories in height with a one-story wing, breeze way, and garage at its north end. The residence represents a unique bridge between two architectural movements, Mediterranean Revival and Art Deco. Typical of the Mediterranean Revival style, the structure has multiple gabled roofs with Cuban barrel tiles and rafter tails, a rough stucco finish, a wooden front entrance door set within a curved wall recess, a projecting window bay with a corbelled arch base, full window shutters with wood-panels, a decorative latticed vent, and a circular masonry opening with a wooden grille. The residence also has architectural elements that are reflective of the Art Deco style, including multiple racing stripes, a porthole window, and a broad sculptural chimney. On the east side of the property, there is a brick landscape wall with a wood-paneled gate that is flanked by niches with multiple shelves.

Post War Modern or Miami Modern (MiMo) (circa 1945 to 1965)

Historical Context. In order to better understand the Post War Modern style of architecture, it is important to view this architectural movement in the context of the social, economic, and technological changes that were taking place during this period.

The United States emerged as a world power following World War II. After years of deprivation during the Great Depression and wartime, everyone dreamed of a carefree, better world for themselves and their children. The Baby Boom was the result of the eagerness to get this new generation underway, while the legislation of the G.I. Bill helped to provide education and prosperity for war veterans.

Miami Beach played a significant role as a training site and redistribution center for the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II. The immediate availability of the City as a training center in 1942 is credited with reducing the length of the war effort by six to eight months and saving the government \$6 million in building costs.⁴⁴ After the war, many veterans who had trained as recruits in Miami Beach returned here to vacation or to make their home, often with their brides.

America redirected its enormous industrial capacity back to the domestic economy following the war. There was no longer a perceived need for rationing, conserving, and recycling. It was the age of exuberance and abundance. The economy was thriving and gave rise to the growing middle class. Miami Beach became more popular as a seaside resort and later a retirement community with its warm, tropical climate and beautiful beaches. The need increased for new multi-family residential housing.

Architectural Description. After a hiatus in construction due to World War II, the Post War Modern style picked up where Art Deco and Streamline Moderne left off with the added influences of a booming post war economy, new technologies, and a feeling of national optimism. The local expression of this style has recently been dubbed Miami Modern or MiMo by the Greater Metropolitan Miami area's Urban Arts Committee (much as the term Art Deco was first applied about 1965 when the style actually first appeared in the 1920s).

The Post War Modern style in Miami Beach established a path of its own in terms of modern functional simplicity with a new vocabulary of pizzazz. Essentially the strong design personality of Art Deco and Streamline Moderne, as it evolved over two decades in Miami Beach, significantly gave way to the changing dictates of use and function in the era of post war seaside resort and residential architecture. It was a newly invented style, as architect Robert M. Little observed:

*A good many of our modern designs must be developed without a precedent to go on. We are in fact making precedent with some of our building now, particularly in South Florida where new techniques are more readily accepted because they are so well suited to a sunny climate.*⁴⁵

From about 1945 to 1965, the widely popular Post War Modern style was frequently applied to hotels,

44 "Army Life on Beach in Second Year," Miami Herald, 19 February 1943.

45 "Architect Says U.S.A. Produced 'Modern,'" Miami Herald, 12 July 1948.

commercial buildings, apartment houses, and single family homes throughout Miami Beach. Post War Modern style buildings generally made an extensive use of glass and poured concrete. They often mixed two or more textured surfaces together (i.e. stucco with stone, brick, or mosaic tile as well as contrasting smooth and fluted stucco surfaces). The style featured such dramatic elements as accordion-like folded plate walls, acute angles, dynamic parabolas, delta wings, sweeping curved walls, and soaring pylons. Other commonly occurring design elements and materials that were added to the architectural vocabulary of the Post War Modern style structures included: brise soleil, architectural accents with exotic themes, brick or stone faced feature areas, and cast concrete decorative panels with geometric patterns. Architect Morris Lapidus further expanded the architectural language of this style when he made popular cheese holes, woggles, and beanpoles.

The low-scale apartment houses in the Post War Modern style commonly featured floor plans that were reorganized from interior double-loaded corridors (a central corridor with rooms on each side) to open air corridors or catwalks on one side or more. Single-block massing remained a dominant characteristic, but new functional exterior elements profoundly impacted on the design. Overhanging roof plates and projecting floor slabs became typical of the new style along with paired or clustered pipe columns. Roofs were generally flat; however, low-pitched roofs with flat tile or barrel tile also were utilized. Rounded or "soft" eaves were often incorporated into both roof types. Varied roof angles and delta wings often added visual interest to the apartment buildings in this style.

Low-scale apartment houses in the Post War Modern style typically featured casement, jalousie, or awning windows. Drama was added to the fenestration with flush or projecting boxed windows as well as with windows and eyebrows that wrap the corners of the building. Jalousie doors were commonly installed along the open air corridors to enter individual apartment units. Symmetrical open staircases with decorative railings became significant exterior design features. The railings served as the ornamentation or "jewelry" of the building; they highlighted the open air corridors, balconies, and staircases. Wrought iron railing designs commonly used in this style included ribbon, diamond, geometric, floral, and swag patterns. Other typical railing materials were metal mesh panels and cast concrete breeze block in elaborate patterns. Additional design elements of the Post War Modern style frequently incorporated into low-scale apartment houses included: brick or stone faced wall panels and landscape planters as well as applied masonry sculptural elements denoting marine and nautical themes.

The Post War Modern style has come of age as a contributing historical style in Miami Beach. It is now enjoying a greatly expanded appreciation as an architectural movement of historical importance both here as well as in other cities across the nation, including New York, Los Angeles, and Miami. Strong evidence of this phenomenon was the exhibit in New York City (March 13 - May 8, 2002) entitled, "Beyond the Box: Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Miami and New York." It was co-presented by the Urban Arts Committee of Miami Beach and the Municipal Arts Society of New York City (the latter is credited with saving New York's Grand Central Terminal from demolition in the 1960s as well as dozens of other historic structures since 1897). This fabulous exhibit attracted much publicity and helped to raise awareness of the special qualities of Post War Modern architecture in South Florida, in particular Miami Beach, and in New York City. More recently, the first book devoted solely to the Post War Modern architectural movement in South Florida was published in 2004. Written by Eric Nash and Randall Robinson, Jr., MiMo: Miami Modern Revealed has been well received as a significant body of emerging historic architecture.

South Florida's Post War Modern architecture has been compared to the Doo Wop style of resort hotels in several Atlantic coastal towns in New Jersey as well as the Googie style reflected in coffee shops, drive-ins, and motels in Southern California and the American Southwest. Unfortunately, these fabulous Post War Modern style buildings are being demolished at an alarmingly rapid rate in South Florida and elsewhere in the country. Whatever spirited label the style may be given (Post War Modern, MiMo, Doo Wop, Googie, or simply Mid-Century Modern Architecture), the architecture of this unique period must be afforded protection in Miami Beach. There was indeed much to be celebrated in the years following the victory in World War II. These mid-century structures represent the physical memory of the spirit of optimism and sense of fun and joy, which played such a major role in our City's spectacular recovery after the war.

Examples of Contributing Structures designed in the Post War Modern or MiMo style in the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District include the following:

Surprise Lake Apartments (now Esquire House) at 4710-4720 Pinetree Drive;
Pinetree Apartments (now Lighthouse) 4730-4740 Pinetree Drive;
St. John's on the Lake First United Methodist Church at 4760 Pinetree Drive;
Lake View Apartments (now Pinetree Palms) at 4780 Pinetree Drive; and
4800 Pinetree Drive.

(Refer to **Figures 20 through 24** for current photos of these structures.)



Figure 20 Built in 1948, the Pinetree Apartments (now Lighthouse) at 4730-4740 Pinetree Drive was designed by Norman M. Giller in the Post War Modern style. Notice that the pair of bar-shaped building wings is connected by a grand “proscenium” with vertical fins, panels of fieldstone, and continuous eyebrows.



Figure 21 Built in 1949, St. John's Methodist Church at 4760 Pinetree Drive was designed by A. Hensel Fink and Robert M. Little in the Post War Modern style. It features a smooth stucco surface, simple design lines, and strong vertical fins in the steeple. St. John's was recognized for its layout and design by the Church Architectural Guild of America at their annual meeting in 1953.



Figure 22 Built in 1950, the Surprise Lake Apartments (now Esquire House) at 4710-4720 Pinetree Drive is an ensemble of four, two-story buildings that were designed by M. Tony Sherman in the Post War Modern style. These buildings feature multiple two-story high porticos supported by pipe columns, jalousie and awning style windows, jalousie doors, pipe railings, and flat roofs with boxed eaves. Although not visible in this photo, the two northern buildings (shown above from the opposite side) are connected on the east or front elevation facing Pinetree Drive by a catwalk with a two-story angular pylon in the center.



Figure 23 Built in 1950, the Lake View Apartments (now Pine Tree Palms) at 4780 Pinetree Drive was designed by Gilbert M. Fein in the Post War Modern style. As seen in the current photo above, the building's front elevation displays a shallow eyebrow and a vertical panel of checkerboard-scored stucco.



Figure 24 Built in 1953, the apartment house called 4800 Pinetree Drive was designed by Donald Reiff in the Post War Modern style. Notice that the building's front elevation features a dramatic contrast between a pylon with vertical ribs of stucco and a sweeping concave wall with a row of projecting bricks on their narrow ends.



Figure 25 This current photo shows the Regency House at 353 West 47th Street (left). Completed in 1963, the nine-story apartment building was designed by MacKay & Gibbs as a late example of Post War Modern architecture. Due to its scale and late construction date, it has been identified by the Historic Preservation Board as a "non-contributing" property in the proposed historic district. Also seen in this photo is the westernmost structure of the four Surprise Lake Apartment buildings (now Esquire House) at 4710-4720 Pinetree Drive (right).

X. PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Criteria for Designation:** The Planning Department finds the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District to be in compliance with the Criteria for Designation listed in Section 118-592 in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code.
2. **Site Boundaries:** On December 14, 2004, the Historic Preservation Board reviewed the designation report and adopted the boundaries as recommended by the Planning Department for the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District.

On January 25, 2005, the Planning Board reviewed the designation report and adopted the boundaries as recommended by the Historic Preservation Board and Planning Department for the proposed historic district. (Refer to **Section IV, Description of Boundaries**, for more information.)

3. **Areas Subject to Review:** The Planning Department recommends that the areas subject to review shall include all exterior building elevations and public interior spaces, site and landscape features, public open spaces and public rights-of-way, and all vacant or parking lots included within the boundaries of the proposed Flamingo Waterway Historic District. Regular maintenance of public utilities, drainage, and mechanical systems, sidewalks, and roadways shall not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.
4. **Review Guidelines:** The Planning Department recommends that a decision on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be based upon compatibility of the physical alteration or improvement with surrounding properties and where deemed applicable in substantial compliance with the following:
 - a. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, as revised from time to time;
 - b. Other guidelines/policies/plans adopted or approved by resolution or ordinance by the City Commission;
 - c. All additional criteria as listed under Sections 118-564(b) and 118-564(c) in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code;
 - d. City of Miami Beach Design Guidelines as adopted by the Joint Design Review/Historic Preservation Board on October 12, 1993, amended June 7, 1994, as may be revised from time to time.

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Figure 22: City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Surprise Lake Apartments (now Esquire House), 4710-4720 Pinetree Drive, photo, 30 December 2003.

Figure 23: City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Lake View Apartments (now Pine Tree Palms), 4780 Pinetree Drive, photo, 30 December 2003.

Figure 24: City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, 4800 Pinetree Drive, photo, 30 December 2003.

Figure 25: City of Miami Beach, Planning Department, Regency House, 353 West 47th Street, photo, 30 December 2003.

APPENDIX I

PROPOSED FLAMINGO WATERWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT PROPERTIES LIST

<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>BUILDING NAME</u> [original name] current name	<u>USE</u> [original use] current use	<u>ARCHITECT</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT</u>	<u>STYLE</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
WEST 47TH STREET						
301	Municipal Parking Lot					
311-335	[Community Center Apartments] Berwick Building —Remodeling of South and West Elevations	[Commercial/Apts] Mixed Use	Charles L. Inscho	1926	Altered Mediterranean Revival	Contributing
			John & Coulton Skinner	1940	Modest Streamline Moderne	
353	[Regency House]	[Apartments] Apartments	MacKay & Gibbs	1962	Post War Modern	Non-Contributing
PINETREE DRIVE						
4710-4720	[Surprise Lake Apartments] Esquire House —Site Includes Four Buildings	[Apartments] Co-operative	M. Tony Sherman	1950	Post War Modern	Contributing
4730-4740	[Pinetree Apartments] Lighthouse Apartments	[Apartments] Co-operative	Norman M. Giller		1948 Post War Modern	Contributing
4742	Private Parking Lot					
4760	[St. John's on the Lake First United Methodist Church] —Rear Addition	[Church] Church	A. Hensel Fink/ Robert M. Little	1949	Post War Modern	Contributing
			Alexander Lewis	1958	Post War Modern	
4764	[J.H. Assel (original owner)] Parsonage of St. John's on the Lake First United Methodist Church	[Single-Family Home] Parsonage	Russell T. Pancoast	1934	Mediterranean Revival/ Art Deco Transitional	Contributing

<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>BUILDING NAME</u> [original name] current name	<u>USE</u> [original use] current use	<u>ARCHITECT</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT</u>	<u>STYLE</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
PINETREE DRIVE (Continued)						
4780	[Lake View Apartments] Pine Tree Palms	[Apartments] Condominium	Gilbert M. Fein	1950	Post War Modern	Contributing
4790-4800	4800 Pinetree Drive	[Apartments] Condominium	Donald Reiff	1953	Post War Modern	Contributing
4812	[Anglers Apartments]	[Apartments] Apartments	Charles L. Inscho	1926	Mediterranean Revival	Contributing
4816	Private Parking Lot					